

THE

Gospel of Slavery:

A
PRIMER OF FREEDOM.

BY IRON GRAY.

Proclaim liberty throughout the land unto all the inhabitants thereof.

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A Stands for *Adam*. Creation began
 By giving dominion of Nature to man.
 Men differ in color, and stature, and weight,
 Nor equal are all in their talent or state,
 But *equal in rights* are the great and the small
 In sight of the God and Creator of all.
 Then *how* comes dominion of brother by brother?
 Or how can the one be the lord of the other?
 Consider it well—for an answer I crave,
 That reaches the question of Master and Slave.

“We hold these truths to be self-evident: That all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.”—*Decl. of Ind.* It is nothing to affirm that the Negro, or Indian, or Arab, is not equal to the white man—namely, in talent and the like. No two *white* men are equal in all respects—but if you deny an equality of *rights*, specify the grounds of such denial.



B Stands for *Bloodhound*. On merciless fangs
The Slaveholder feels that his "property" hangs,
And the dog and the master are hot on the track,
To torture or bring the black fugitive back.
The weak has but fled from the hand of the strong,
Asserting the right and resisting the wrong,
While he who exults in a skin that is white,
A Bloodhound employs in asserting his might.
—O chivalry-layman and dogmatist-priest,
Say, which is the monster—the man, or the beast?

How long is it since Southern papers advertised the offers of rival hunters of fugitive Negroes, who claimed that they had the best bloodhounds, &c. ? Truly an honorable and manly vocation. Runaway Slaves were advertised as having been torn by the dogs, thus and so, on former occasions of flight, and large rewards were offered for the capture of such ingrates, dead or alive ! Shall not specimens of these advertisements be some day included in the literary curiosities of civilization ?



C Stands for *Cotton*. Its beautiful bolls,
 And bales of rich value, the Master controls.
 Of "mud-sills" he prates, and would haughtily bring
 The world to acknowledge that "Cotton is King."
 But "*Democrat Coal*" and "*Republican Corn*,"
 The locks of the monarch have latterly shorn;
 And Slaveocrats, living by clamorous fraud,
 By Freemen shall yet into learning be awed,
 That the sceptre is *not* in position nor gift,
 But only in honest, industrial thrift.

"What is the difficulty, and what the remedy? Not in the election of Republican Presidents. No. Not in the non-execution of the Fugitive bill. No. But it lies back of all these. It is found in the Atheistic Red Republican doctrine of the Declaration of Independence. Until that is trampled under feet, there can be no peace."—*Dr. Smyth*, a Rebel leader in South Carolina. "Mud-sills" and "poor white trash" seem not to his liking; but what if *they* should trample *him* under feet?



D Stands for *Driver*. His duty, I hear,
Is mostly described as the Slave-Overseer.
O tell me, I pray you, if any one can,
If planters acknowledge the brute as a man!
With whip and with pistols, the vagabond wields
The law of the Master in hovels and fields,
But scarcely removed, in a social degree,
Above the rude gang that he governs is *he*,
And, like the Slave *Trader*, his service is prized
As treason is loved, and the traitor despised!

Some persons sneer at any distinction between hirelings of a month or year and hirelings for life—the latter being their definition of Southern Slavery! A taste of the wormwood and the gall might bring them to exclaim with *Sterne*: “Disguise thyself as thou wilt, still Slavery, still thou art a bitter draught; and though thousands in all ages have been made to drink of thee, thou art no less bitter on that account.” Suppose the chalice were commended to the lips of Slaveholders?



E Stands for *Eagle*. In Liberty springs
The strength of his beak and the pride of his wings.
Though vultures still cloud the political sky,
And “carrion, more carrion!” incessantly cry,
Shall Slave-craft prevail, and the moralist nod
O’er evils reserved in the judgment of God?
—The Eagle has come to the rescue of right,
And all institutions of fraudulent might,
Shall perish and cease from the bountiful clime,
Long cursed by the stench of a carrion-crime!

The Constitution grants neither right nor authority to interfere with the domestic institutions of any State; but Congress, representing the people and the States, has absolute control in the Territories. “More Slavery!” has been the continual cry of the South. Rebellion provoked the war-power of the President; and it is now probable that the institution which claimed a continent, will be numbered with the abominations that *were*! Let all the people say Amen.



F Stands for *Fugitives* hasting from wrath,
And furies are hot on their dangerous path.
Away from the cabins of slavery pomp,
A refuge they seek in the hideous swamp;
Or, haply eluding the hunters of blood,
They struggle through thicket and perilous flood,
Till, reaching the lines of the Union Host,
The echo has died of the scandalous boast,
“Hurra for the banner that Liberty waves,
“With stars for the Masters and stripes for the Slaves!”

A history of this Liberty War would be very incomplete without sample-sketches of the patient, shrewd efforts of individuals and families of Slaves in getting away from the house of bondage into the lines of the Union Army. Almost starved, hunted by dogs and men, shot at, some of the party killed,—none but the good Lord knoweth the miseries endured by thousands in escaping from the comfortable, patriarchal, Gospel institution of the South!



G Stands for *Gospel*. How beautiful are
 The feet of the bearer of news from afar,
 When coming to touch a humanity-chord
 And preach the acceptable year of the Lord!
 Set free the scourged bondman, now branded and sore,
 And write him a freeman, *a man* evermore,
 Around whom a family closely may draw.
 —Or if the Good Gospel be Slavery Law,
 The clergy, for aught that to reason appears,
 Might honestly prosper as Slave Auctioneers!

Why not? Disrespect is intended for such clergymen *only* as put Southern Slavery on Bible grounds. They might sell books, shoes, horses, by public outcry, and feel no shame of sin. If the Gospel endorses colored people as property, *why* should the clergy scruple to be Slave-Auctioneers? Bishop Hopkins, of Vermont, might do a thriving business in that line, down South. Doubtless he is popular in that region, and would be largely patronized!



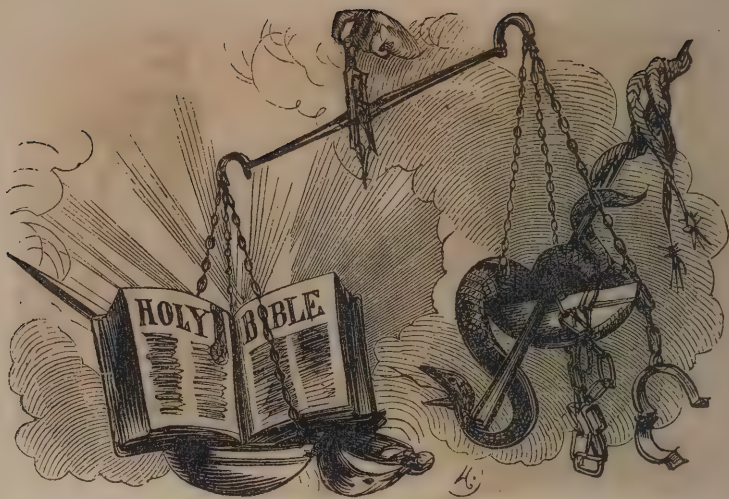
H Stands for *Harvest*. We reap as we sow:
 If thistles you plant, do you know what will grow?
 Enlarge your plantations, and multiply slaves,
 Till luxury gets what it wrongfully craves,—
 Yet woe be to *him* who the inquiry scorns,
 Do grapes grow on brambles or figs upon thorns?
 Consider it well, ere the summer be past,
 And the harvest be ended, with gloom at the last.
 And ever this adage in memory keep,
 Who sows to the wind, of the whirlwind shall reap.

The evils of Slavery to the *white* race, in a material sense, are clearly shown by statistics; but no one can reckon the low estate of education, religion, and morals, especially in the country-districts of the South. The larger the plantations are, the wider is the space between the white families; and an increase of the number of slaves, is no increase of exalting social intercourse. The mansion cannot escape the malaria of the hovels, nor can *any* one escape the just judgment of the Almighty.



I Stands for *Infidel*. Many condemn
 What you and I hold, as a riddle to *them* ;
 And sceptics are made (it is mournfully true)
 By priests in the pulpit and saints in the pew,
 Who torture the Gospel to get at the proof
 That *one* man is made for another's behoof!
 The Bible comes *not* with its quickening light,
 Till conscience and reason interpret aright,
 And vainly you moan o'er the infidel fruit
 While nourishing faith in the Slavery-root.

The creed should be better than the man ; but what if the man be better than the creed ? Business relations with the South, or friends residing there, or political clanship, may so blind men to the hideous conjunction of the Gospel and Southern Slavery, that they may profess to believe in both ; but religionists grieve the Holy Spirit and chiefly make Infidels, by fastening any inhuman institution or abominable theory on the Word of God.



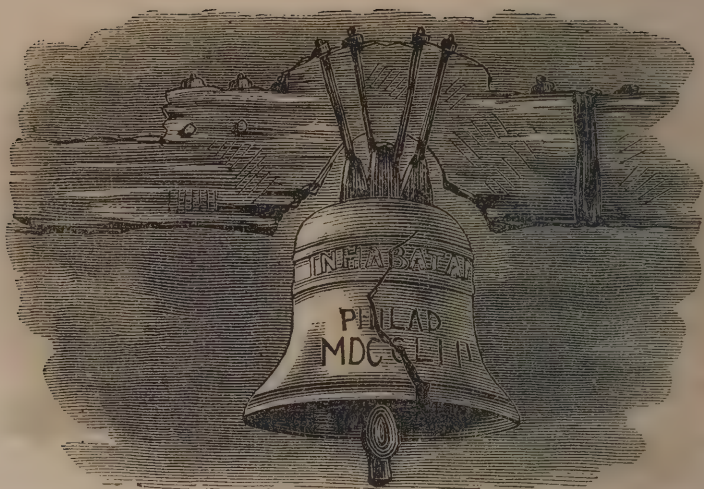
J Stands for *Justice*. Whoe'er a man is,
 Proclaim and defend what is rightfully his.
 Content yourself *not* with his lawful demands,
 Nor harden the links of his slavery-bands;
 For all institutions are born of the dust
 Which conscience declares to be wrong and unjust.
 —Will God in his majesty look to the hue
 In making award of the recompense due?
 Or will he in judgment be heedless or slack,
 For justice withheld from the ignorant black?

“Your gold and silver is cankered, and the rust of them shall be a witness against you, and shall eat your flesh as it were fire. . . . Behold, the hire of the laborers who have reaped down your fields, which is of you kept back by fraud, crieth; and the cries of them which have reaped, are entered into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth. Ye have lived in pleasure on the earth, and been wanton: ye have nourished your hearts as in a day of slaughter.”—*James v. 1—3.*



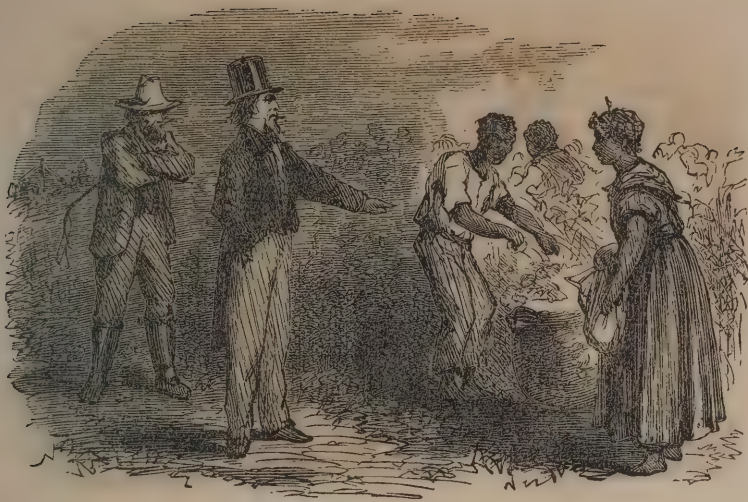
K Stands for *Kidnapper*. Whoso receives
What others have stolen, is leagu'd with the thieves.
But setting aside what this proverb reveals,
The Slaveholder *breeds* what the Kidnapper *steals* !
Distinction there is, and a difference too—
But *which*, if you chose, would be chosen by *you* ?
To buy, or to sell, involves profit or waste—
To breed, or to steal, is a question of taste ;
And whoso does either, a business may claim
That perfects in meanness the sin and the shame !

What odds to the buyer whether the chattel has been kidnapped or bought by the Trader ? In *one* sense, there is something manly (because risk of life is incurred), in taking prisoners in war and making slaves of them ; but kidnapping is unmitigated villainy. How then can we sufficiently express abhorrence of the men who make a business of breeding slaves for the market ? Doubtless, they are all, *all* honorable men, and worthily accounted the chivalry of the land !



L Stands for *Liberty*. Know you the bell
That '76 sounded so nobly and well?
Or know you that soon was developed a flaw,
By Freedom's assertion of Slavery Law?
"Created all equal."—"Excepting the black,"
From States of the Union the answer came back.
Then cracked the big bell. Vainly chipped to the core,
No "compromise measures" its tone could restore,
And the prophecy stands, though the bell, in its fall,
Now silently hangs in Old Liberty Hall!

The bell referred to, cast in 1753, has on it the inscription, "Proclaim liberty throughout the land unto all the inhabitants thereof."—*Lev. xxv. 10*. Was this a prophecy? That bell announced the Declaration of Independence in 1776. It was afterwards cracked—I know not the date. Occasional use on national anniversaries increased the difficulty. Chipping, so as to separate the vibrating edges, failed to remedy the mischief. It now hangs in Independence Hall.



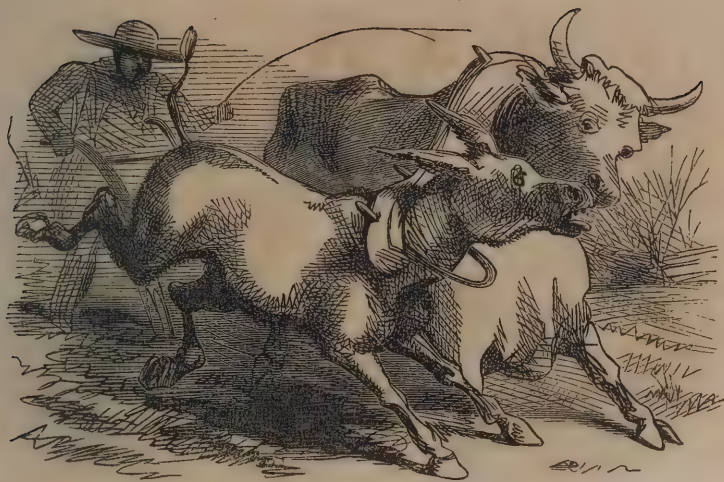
M Stands for *Master*. When one would impart
To others his knowledge of mystery-art,
A Master is *he* and Apprentices *they*,
And what he commands it is theirs to obey.
But if from the cradle till laid in the grave,
You claim the relation of Master and Slave,
And stretch your dominion, by heirship or gold,
O'er men who as cattle are driven and sold,
Consider, I pray you, the end of the strife,
When called to account by the Master of Life.

Is the distinction without a difference? An Apprentice is indentured by his own consent. The term of service is limited and specified. There is a covenant that he shall be sent to school. He has legal redress in case of maltreatment or neglect. He cannot be branded with a hot iron. If he absconds, he cannot be hunted with dogs, nor advertised for, dead or alive. He cannot be sold. At twenty-one he is a freeman. Are these the marks of the condition of a Slave?



N Stands for *Negro*. To be all he can,
Without doing wrong, is the birth-right of man,
And noblest humanity evermore lies
In prompting and helping the lowly to rise.
Are Slaves dull and ignorant? Multitudes are:
Shall therefore the Master *improvement debar*?
Yet if to instruct them you open your mouth,
Beware of the penalty, down in the South!
—Can *that* be of God which for Slavery greed
Forbids you to teach a poor Negro to read?

Whether the African race, now in bondage in the South, be or be not in a better condition than their kindred in Africa, need not here be discussed. Morality and religion inquire, simply, whether Southern laws encourage an advancement? Do they not rather *hinder*, by severe penalties, any efforts to educate the slave population? Public Schools are the pride and glory of the North: What is the boast and shame of the South?



O Stands for *Ox*, that necessity broke
To work with an Ass in the Union Yoke.
To walk in the furrow and take the short end,
Seemed ever the fate of the Ox to attend,
While the Ass, having learned a political trick,
Knew wickedly well how to bray and to kick.
But patience wears out, though it ever adorns,—
The ears are now feeling the push of the horns,
And wonders of justice are coming to pass:—
The North is the Ox and the South is the Ass.

From 1789 to the outbreak of the Rebellion, Slaveholders occupied the Presidential chair for 48 years, and Northern sympathizers with Slavery for 12 years more—leaving only 12 years for Freedom-proclivities in the President. Although greatly outnumbered by the North, the South almost uniformly ruled in Congress. Not getting *all* it demanded, the Tariff was made a pretext for secession. “The next pretext,” said Jackson, “will be the Negro or Slavery question.”



P Stands for *Principle*. Policy fain
Would measure all deeds by the loss or the gain,
While Principle never finds aught to consult
But conscience and duty, whate'er the result.
In Slaveholding policy, all that you win
May fitly be reckoned the wages of sin,
And what has been earned by the master or thrall,
Is never withheld by the Ruler of All.
Perhaps you will learn, when the payment is due,
That a deed which is wrong is impolitic too.

In 1786 Washington expressed his determination never to "possess another slave by purchase." Avowed in 1794 that he held slaves "very reluctantly to his own feelings." By will emancipated all he held, making provision for the support of the aged and infirm, and for the education of the young—and most solemnly enjoined his executors to see that his instructions were religiously fulfilled. According to the Slavery propagandists of this age of grace, all this was fundamentally wrong !



Q Stands for *Query*. Inquisitive thought
May lead to conclusions not anxiously sought.
Suppose of Quadroon we a moment should think,
With *one* side of ancestry sable as ink,
The other side claiming complexion as fair
As fatherly planters most commonly wear:
The child of her Master, a Slave-daughter still,
Must bow to the law of his sensual will;
And when he shall sell her, (perhaps very soon)
The Query may follow the chattel Quadroon.

The cry of "amalgamation" as the result of the abolition of Slavery, comes with a very ill grace from Southerners. How many nearly-white children have been sent to the North for an education, or to hide their negro-blood? How many such have been manumitted, to guard against their continuance in bondage by any mishap? How many Quadroons have been sold voluntarily or brought to the block by the pecuniary embarrassments of their father-masters?



R Stands for *Rebel*. The Colonies rose
Against the stern sway of tyrannical foes,
But Washington, Jefferson, all were ignored,
When Southerners lifted the sceptre and sword,
And Slavery lust to Rebellion gave birth
Against the best government known in the earth.
Did Rebeldom look to the shame and the cost
Of seeking by war the control they had lost?
Or know they how ages will reckon the guilt
Of a Temple of Freedom on Slavery built?

“The foundations of our new government are laid, its cornerstone rests upon the great truth that the negro is not equal to the white man. . . . This, our new government, is the first in the history of the world, based upon this great physical, philosophical and moral truth. . . . This stone which was rejected by the first builders, is become the chief stone of the corner in our new edifice. . . . Our Confederacy is a God-sent missionary to the nations.”—*Alexander H. Stephens.*



S Stands for *Slavery*. Nations of old
 Made bondmen by warfare, or bought them with gold;
 And if to the Jews you incline to go back,
 No special enslavement you find of the black.
 But "might is not right," as in piracy scenes,
 Else why do you censure the stern Algerines?
 Or what if in Congo a thousand white men
 Were Slaves, wholly hopeless of freedom again,—
 Would bishops and priests of the Slavery line,
 Quote *Bible* to prove it both right and divine?

"Slavery and the Slave Trade pervaded every nation of civilized antiquity....The founder of the Jewish nation was a Slaveholder....Greeks enslaved each other....The Slave-markets of Rome were filled with men of every complexion and every clime....It is from about the year 990 that regular accounts of the *Negro* Slave-trade exist."—*Bancroft's United States*, i. 159.
 Any *Bible* argument for Slavery must therefore *except* the black, if *any* color is to be excepted!



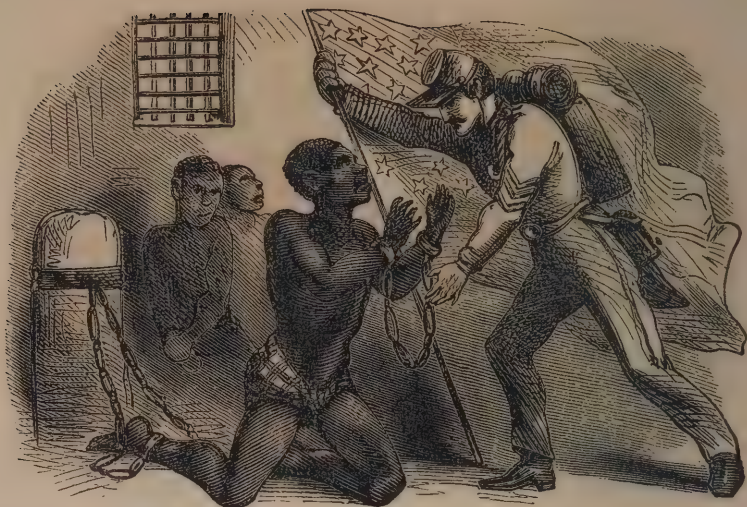
T Stands for *Trader*. To call him a brute
 Would slander creation, beyond a dispute.
 The Planter will mingle and socially dine
 With dealers in cotton, and cattle, and swine,
 But Slave-driving Traders (with common accord)
 By Slave-holding gentry are shunned and abhorred!
 Does conscience, with scruples of right, intervene
 Concerning a business repugnantly mean?
 Yet whoso shall doubt, may the difference tell:
 What we rightfully buy, we may honestly sell.

The world moves, slowly it may be, but surely. Russia
 abolished Serfdom by an imperial decree, and our Republic is
 cutting a tangled knot by the edge of the sword. The loathing
 with which the Slave Trader has long been regarded, even in the
 South, was the index-finger of the hand of God. It is now a
 voice sounding in the darkness as a prophecy of coming day.
 Will not angels join the chorus of welcome? May the good
 Lord hasten the hour of deliverance.



U Stands for *Union*. The Federal law
Into true common weal would the Colonies draw,
And States, that might else into anarchy run,
Were banded and leagued, indivisibly one—
And a *Nation* was born, with the rallying call,
“The Stars-and-Stripes Banner that waves over all!”
Secession may rage, and the kingdoms afar
May shout the brief wrath of a fiery star,
But *E Pluribus Unum* shall evermore be
The motto and law of the land of the free!

“I must declare here, as I have often done before, and which has been repeated by the greatest and wisest of statesmen and patriots in this and other lands, that it [the United States] is the best and freest government, the most equal in its rights, the most just in its decisions, the most lenient in its measures, and the most aspiring in its principles to elevate the race of man, that the sun ever shone upon.”—*Alexander H. Stephens*, in Georgia Convention, Jan. 1, 1861.



V Stands for *Victory*. Villainy long,
 "The *sum* of *all* villainies," prospered in wrong;
 But when it uplifted the bloody red hand,
 The verdict was sealed of its doom in the land.
 Poor *whites* in the South by aristocrats bowed,
 And millions of bondmen are crying aloud;
 And Freedom's renown, and Humanity's need,
 Alike for a LIBERTY-VICTORY plead;
 And triumph and peace shall thro' righteousness come,
 When Slavery dies and its pleaders are dumb.

Even when Fort Sumter was environed by threatening Rebel batteries, there was a spirit of compromise in all the land; but the first gun aimed at the Flag of Liberty was "the beginning of the end" of Slavery. The Star Spangled Banner of our fathers, that had long floated in honor and triumph, was trodden down and trailed in the dust by miscreant-traitors; and it *must* yet be vindicated and exalted in righteousness, though it be through blood and fire.



W Stands for *Woman*. In Slavery-life,
Full many are mothers, but no one is wife.
For decency's sake, form of wedding there is,
But the parties are claimed by the master as his;
And the children are sold, and the father is sold
To this or that trader, "to have and to hold;"
And the woman is whipped, for the motherly moan
And the cry of a heart that is left all alone.
O master all monstrous! is conscience amiss
In dooming the sham of a wedding like this!

Certain Southern ladies claimed, not long since, that they care as tenderly for slave mothers as Northern ladies care for poor white mothers. "Possibly that is true," was the reply, "but Northern ladies do not afterwards sell the baby!"—Besides this, it is the *money-interest* of Southerners to look well to the increase of their *property*, whereas a true humanity, as a principle, underlies and quickens the charitable attention of Northern ladies, above referred to.



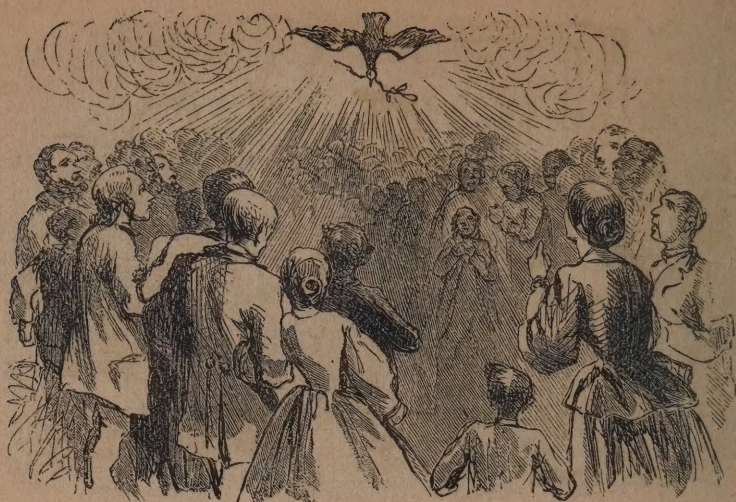
X Stands for *Cross*. By the lusts of the flesh
 Men open the wounds of the Saviour afresh,
 And live for the gain that is nothing but loss,
 If leading away from the blood of the Cross.
 Yet many there are who deliverance mock,
 And corner-stone make of a Slave Trader's block.
 Ignoring the grace of the One who was priced,
 By daily oppression they crucify Christ,
 And turn a deaf ear to the spirit that cried,
 Shall the weak brother perish for whom the Lord died?

Setting aside all controversy as to the meaning or efficacy of the sacrifice of Christ, it is clear that he died for all, tasted death for every man, gave himself a ransom for all, without distinction of color, character, station or creed. Whatever allowance the Lord may make for sins of ignorance, can the great God look with complacency on any people who by Slavery count the blood of the covenant an unholy thing, and do despite unto the spirit of grace?—*Hebrews* x. 26—31.



Y Stands for *Yankee*. Trained up in the schools
Of rugged New England, few ever are fools,
And many have carried the virtues of home
Abroad in the earth wheresoever they roam.
But what shall we say of the renegade knaves
Who down in the South become whippers of slaves?
Into ownership, too, peradventure they fall,
By wedding plantations, and "niggers" and all,
And then, for the depths of all infamy fit,
They find in Secession the bottomless pit.

A man born and reared in barbarism is with difficulty brought into the proprieties and amenities of civilization: alas! how easy a thing it is for a man born and reared in the midst of civilization to glide into the depths of barbarism! It is said that the meanest men, and hottest secessionists, and hardest slave-drivers in the South, are of Yankee origin! Not angels at home, how is it that any of them become such unscrupulous, incarnate devils abroad?



Z Stands for *Zenith*. Though hell from beneath
Much struggle and suffering yet may bequeath,
The fee of the earth we shall trustfully claim
At Liberty's shrine, in Humanity's name.
The spots of the leopard shall token no sin—
No crime shall be charged to the Ethiop's skin—
And, evermore radiant, the zenith shall glow,
The light and the joy of creation below—
For perished shall *then* be the Slavery rod,
And man stand erect in the image of God.

“Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God. Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low, and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough places plain; and the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together; for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.”—*Isaiah* xl. 3—5.

Thy Kingdom Come, O Lord our God!